

TESTIMONY

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BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS**

THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:

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Chairman Kean, Ranking Member Keating, and Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify— together with my USAID counterpart, Ambassador Erin McKee, and my State colleague, Coordinator Maria Longi – on the President’s Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for Europe and Eurasia. I would like to thank this Subcommittee for your partnership in our efforts to support Ukraine as it defends itself against Russia’s war of choice – and other frontline states vulnerable to Russian aggression and malign influence from authoritarian actors like the PRC.

This Subcommittee knows the stakes. As President Biden stated in front of the Royal Castle in Warsaw on February 21, “When Russia invaded, it wasn’t just Ukraine being tested. The whole world faced a test for the ages. Europe was being tested. America was being tested. NATO was being tested. All democracies were being tested.” With the support of Congress – and the American taxpayer – the United States is rising to meet that test. The President’s Fiscal Year 2024 request seeks to advance this vital effort with \$1.49 billion for EUR foreign assistance, \$581.2 million for diplomatic engagement and \$99.9 million for public diplomacy.

Today I want to talk about how our assistance supports five key areas that advance a whole, free, democratic, open Europe – even as Russia wages full-scale war on one of its neighbors.

First and foremost – our assistance is supporting Ukraine to continue its successful defense, and to win the future. Our Fiscal Year 2024 request – with clear oversight and accountability – will support that successful future through democratic, justice sector, and anti-corruption reform; help dismantle the oligarchic structures holding Ukraine back; and accelerate Ukraine’s path to advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

U.S. support is advancing Ukraine's private sector, energy, and cybersecurity investments. It is giving a lifeline to critical government services – like health and law enforcement — and expanding demining programs. This will make it possible for many displaced Ukrainians to come home and return to work – in agriculture, raw materials, and digital services; further, it will enable the country to fight corruption, broaden its exports into European and global markets, and counter Russian and Chinese disinformation.

Ultimately, these efforts aim to give Ukraine the tools to help defend its sovereignty, consolidate its democracy, and move into the EU and global markets. As Secretary Blinken stated before the full HFAC committee on March 23, this Fiscal Year 2024 budget will “sustain our security, economic, energy, and humanitarian support for Ukraine to ensure that President Putin’s war remains a strategic failure.”

Second – our assistance request will fortify a continent more resilient, more independent, and more committed to Euro-Atlantic institutions. Across the region, our support will advance the modernization and sustainability of Allies and partners’ military capabilities; reduce dependence on Russian energy; fortify the region against economic coercion from the PRC; and mitigate trade and supply-chain disruptions.

Our support will advance independent, democratic institutions, civil society, and anticorruption efforts. We are enabling the next phase of integration with the West – in Ukraine, in Moldova, in Georgia, in the Western Balkans and in the South Caucasus.

Third – our request seeks to advance the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of our frontline partners and support civil society championing democratic transitions. In Moldova, we are supporting a vulnerable country’s efforts to weather a strained budget and address corruption, security concerns, an energy crisis, and cyber vulnerabilities. We are also bolstering Moldova’s Western trajectory by advancing anticorruption reforms, increasing access to Western markets, and deepening integration with the EU. In Georgia, we are supporting the Georgian people’s efforts to move toward Euro-Atlantic integration by improving democratic governance, elections and political processes, and the rule of law.

We are actively supporting talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan as they work to achieve a sustainable and durable peace. An agreement would bolster democracy and regional economic integration and push back against Russia’s influence. Russia has used the conflict to maintain its leverage in the region at a significant human cost.

In the Western Balkans, our assistance remains focused on addressing the serious challenges facing the region, including advancing the reforms our regional partners need to make to join the EU; bolster democratic institutions; normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia; strengthen rule of law and independent media; fight corruption and

organized crime; enhance cybersecurity; and promote diversity of energy sources across the region.

In Central Europe, we are advancing transparency, independent media, rule of law, and respect for the human rights of minority communities. And on the democratic aspirations of the Belarusian and Russian people, we continue our programs to sustain civil society advocacy and access to objective media, despite increasing government repression.

Fourth, our assistance is catalyzing our allies and partners – in the G7, in the EU, in NATO, in the United Nations and elsewhere – to address our shared challenges. And the best example of this is Ukraine. The economic support and humanitarian assistance that our Allies and Partners have delivered to Ukraine even exceeds the magnitude of the U.S. economic and humanitarian contributions. Our joint efforts have enabled the approval of a \$15.6 billion IMF loan to stabilize its economy and support a robust reform agenda.

Finally, our EUR diplomatic program budget makes it possible to fund platforms and personnel across 80 posts and here at home in the service of U.S. leadership and U.S. foreign policy objectives in all of these efforts.

With your bipartisan support, our Fiscal Year 2024 budget will enable the United States to rise to the test of this moment. Thank you for inviting me to testify today. I look forward to your questions.